

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are all the claims pending in the application.

Applicants note that replacement sheets are being submitted herewith for Figs. 1, 2, 5 and 6. In particular, Figs. 1 and 2 are being amended to correct a minor error depicted therein with regard to contact nodes A and C, and Figs. 5 and 6 are amended so as to clarify the equivalent circuits depicted therein by including in broken lines the elements that are bypassed due to the contact switching section 12.

In particular, in original Figs. 1 and 2, Applicants note that contact node C was shown as being connected between the protection element 5 and the negative electrode of battery 4, and contact node A was shown as being connected to the second output terminal 6B. This configuration, however, is not consistent with the physical description of the circuit as depicted in Figs. 7 and 8, and is also not consistent with the equivalent circuit shown in Fig. 6.

As shown in Figs. 7 and 8, contact node C is connected to the output terminal 6B, and contact node A is connected between the protection element 5 and the negative electrode of battery 4. Further, as shown in Figs. 7 and 8, contact node C is connected between the detection device 17 and the protection element 5 (see paragraphs [0031] and [0032] of the specification).

Thus, Applicants have amended Figs. 1 and 2 such that contact node C is properly depicted as connected to the output terminal 6B, and contact node A is properly depicted as connected between the protection element 5 and the negative electrode of battery 4. Applicants submit that such amendments are made solely to correct inconsistencies between the specification and the drawings, and therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Further, Applicants note that a number of amendments have been made to the specification and abstract for general readability purposes and to clarify the inconsistencies discussed above. No new matter has been added. Due to the number of changes made, a substitute specification and abstract are submitted herewith. Also enclosed is a marked-up copy of the original specification and abstract showing the changes incorporated into the substitute specification and abstract.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-15 are allowable over the cited prior art. Applicants have amended claims 1, 13 and 14 in view of the comments above so as to correct the inconsistencies that were present between the drawings and the specification. In addition, Applicants note that claims 1 and 13-15 have been amended for improved clarity and general readability purposes.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-15 are patentable over the prior art of record, an indication of which is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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